

Message Text

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72

ACTION NEA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6452

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, NP, IN

SUBJECT: INDIAN REPRESENTATION AT KING'S CORONATION

1. MEA JOINT SECRETARY (NORTHERN) MENON TOLD KREISBERG AND THORNTON LAST WEEKEND THAT INDIANS HAD DEFINITELY DECIDED VICE-PRESIDENT JATTI, RATHER THAN PRESIDENT FAKRUDDIN ALI AHMED WOULD REPRESENT INDIA AT KING'S CORONATION. INDIAN DELEGATION WILL ALSO INCLUDE TWO MINISTERS, PANT (ENERGY) AND RAJ BAHADUR (TOURISM). MENON INSISTED THAT THIS DID NOT REFLECT INTENTION GOI POLITICAL "SLIGHT" OF NEPAL.

2. COMMENT: BOTH MINISTERS ARE MINISTERS OF STATE RATHER THAN FULL CABINET MINISTERS. THIS TOGETHER WITH THE REPRESENTATION AT THE VICE-PRESIDENTIAL LEVEL CLEARLY REFLECTS COOLING OF INDO-NEPAL RELATIONS. MENON ACKNOWLEDGED THE CONTRAST WITH FAKRUDDIN ALI AHMED'S PRESENCE AT THE BHUTANESE CORONATION LAST YEAR. INDIAN OFFICIALS NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT RADHAKRISHNAN, WHO WAS THEN VICE-PRESIDENT, REPRESENTED INDIA AT KING MAHENDRA'S CORONATION IN 1956. NEPALESE EMBASSY OFFICERS HERE BELIEVE THAT THE PRESENCE OF K. C. PANT AS A MEMBER OF THE DELEGATION REFLECTS INDIA'S INTEREST IN HYDROELECTRIC PROJECTS

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IN NEPAL, WHICH WOULD SELL ELECTRICITY TO INDIA. RAJ

BAHADUR IS PROBABLY INCLUDED BECAUSE HE IS A FORMER
AMBASSADOR TO NEPAL.
SCHNEIDER

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